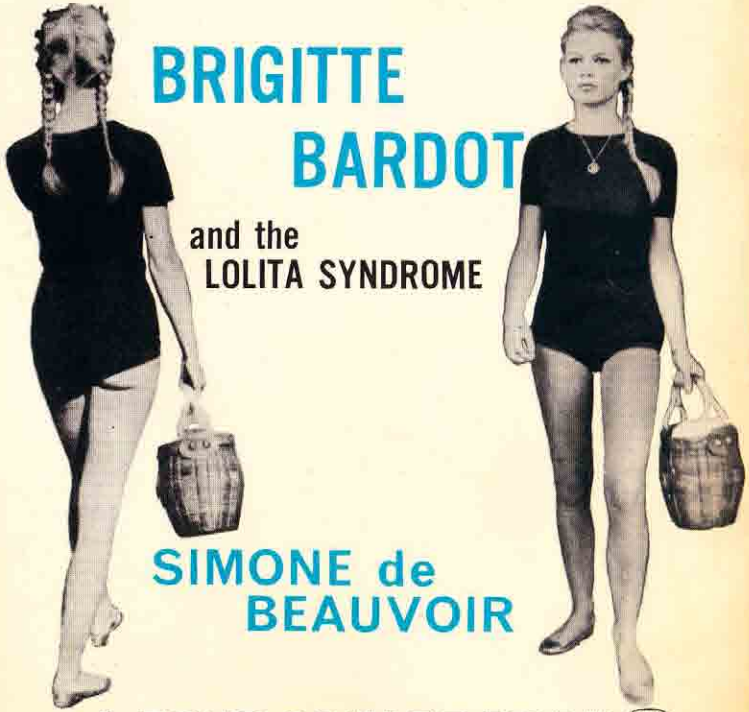
VISIT…

The world's most outrageously sensual film star is the subject of a study by France's leading female intellect. Mlle. de Beauvoir analyses the appeal of Bardot in connection with the ideal of modern woman which tends towards the Lolita child-woman symbol.

'The distinguished French sociologist . . . has written a fascinating treatise'—
THE PEOPLE

'Something most jolly and acceptable . . . pictures of the head of Mlle. Brigitte Bardot and . . . of other bits of her'—
Bernard Levin, THE SPECTATOR



BRIGITTE BARDOT

and the
LOLITA SYNDROME

SIMONE de BEAUVOIR

A FOUR SQUARE BOOK
Published by The New English Library Ltd.

FOUR SQUARE

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Simone de Beauvoir

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Simone de Beauvoir

BRIGITTE BARDOT
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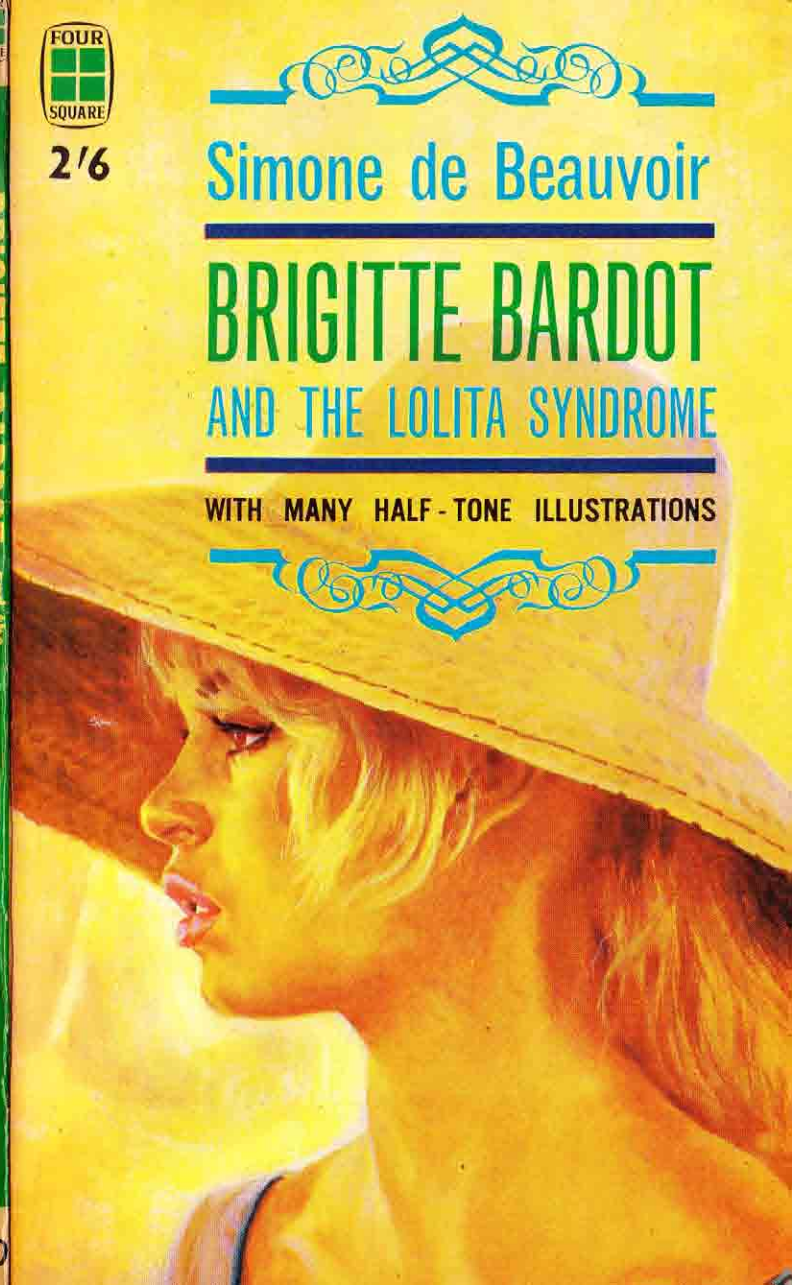
WITH MANY HALF-TONE ILLUSTRATIONS



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THE NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY LTD.

First published in England by Andre Deutsch Ltd. and Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd. in 1960

Second impression November 1960
Translated by Bernard Fretchman
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English translation © 1959 by Esquire Inc.

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FIRST FOUR SQUARE EDITION 1962

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Four Square Books are published by The New English Library Limited from Barnard's Inn Holborn, London EC1. They are made and printed in Great Britain by Love and Malcomson Ltd, Redhill, Surrey

BRIGITTE BARDOT AND THE LOLITA SYNDROME

by SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

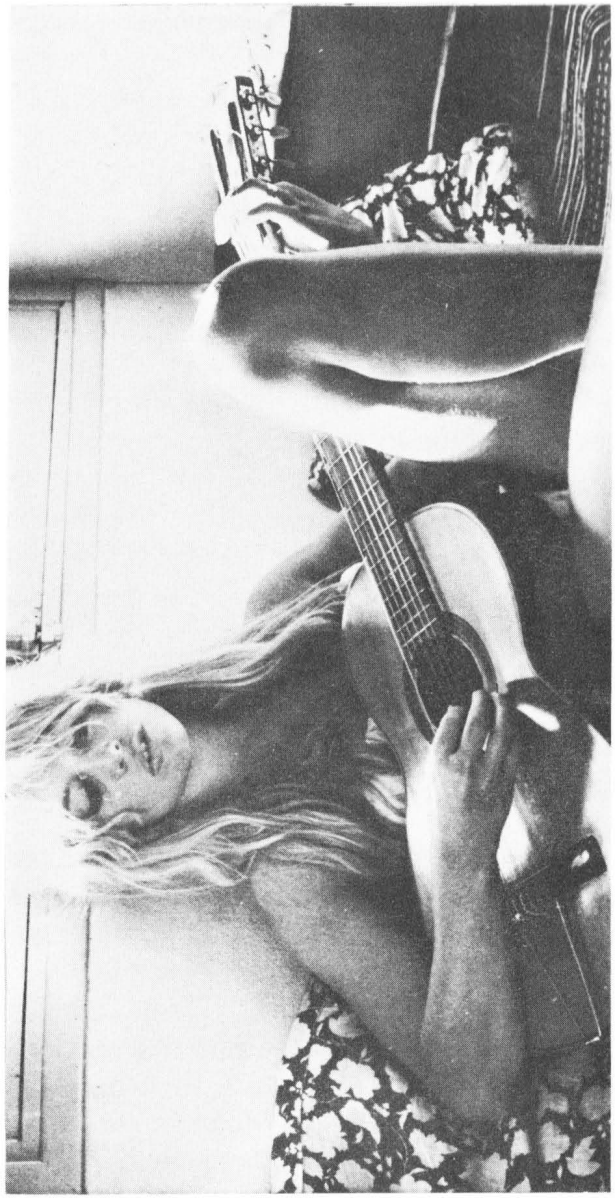
On New Year's Eve, Brigitte Bardot appeared on French television. She was got up as usual—blue jeans, sweater and shock of tousled hair. Lounging on a sofa, she plucked at a guitar. 'That's not hard,' said the women. 'I could do just as well. She's not even pretty. She has the face of a housemaid.' The men couldn't keep from devouring her with their eyes, but they too snickered. Only two or three of us, among thirty or so spectators, thought her charming. Then she did an excellent classical dance number. 'She *can* dance', the others admitted grudgingly. Once again I could observe that Brigitte Bardot was disliked in her own country.

When *And God Created Woman* was shown in first-run houses on the Champs-Elysées, the film, which had cost a hundred and forty million francs, brought in less than sixty. Receipts in the U.S.A. have come to $4,000,000, the equivalent of the sale of 2,500 Dauphines. BB now deserves to be considered an export product as important as Renault automobiles.

She is the new idol of American youth.

She ranks as a great international star. Nevertheless, her fellow-countrymen continue to shy away from her. Not a week goes by without articles in the press telling all about her recent moods and love affairs or offering a new interpretation of her personality, but half of these articles and gossip items seethe with spite. Brigitte receives three hundred fan letters a day, from boys and girls alike, and every day indignant mothers write to newspaper editors and religious and civil authorities to protest against her existence. When three young ne'er-do-wells of reputable families murdered a sleeping old man in a train at Angers, the Parent-Teachers' Association denounced BB to M. Chatenay, the deputy-mayor of the city. It was *she*, they said, who was really responsible for the crime. *And God Created Woman* had been shown in Angers; the young people had been immediately perverted. I am not surprised that professional moralists in all countries, even the U.S.A., have tried to have her films banned. It is no new thing for high-minded folk to identify the flesh with sin and to dream of making a bonfire of works of art, books and films that depict it complacently or frankly.

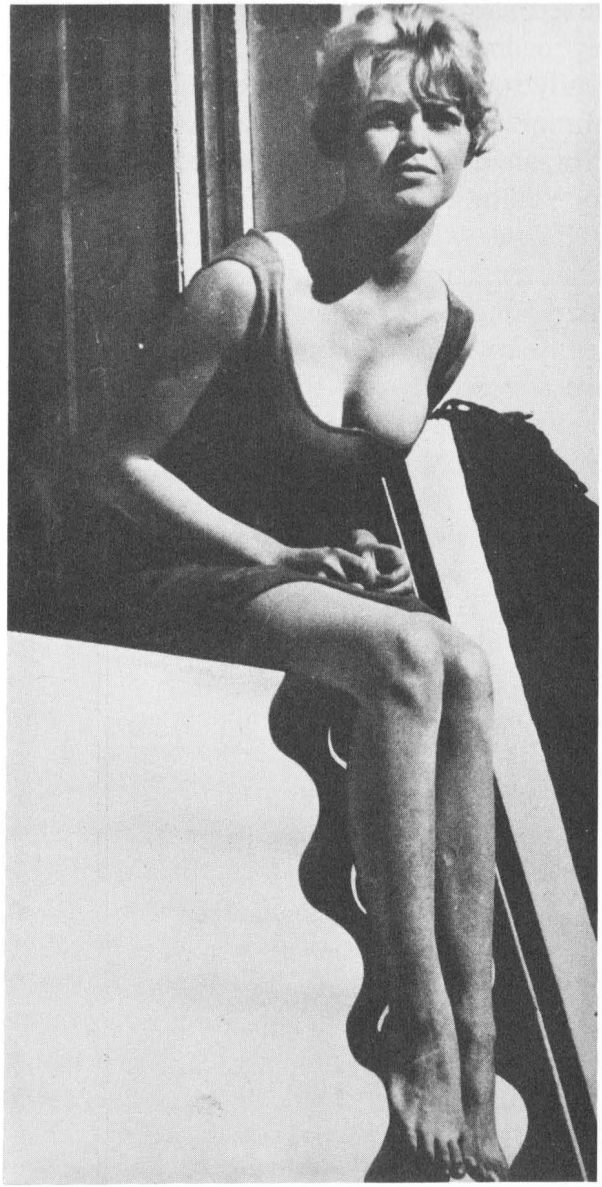
But this official prudery does not explain the French public's very peculiar hostility to BB. Martine Carol also undressed rather



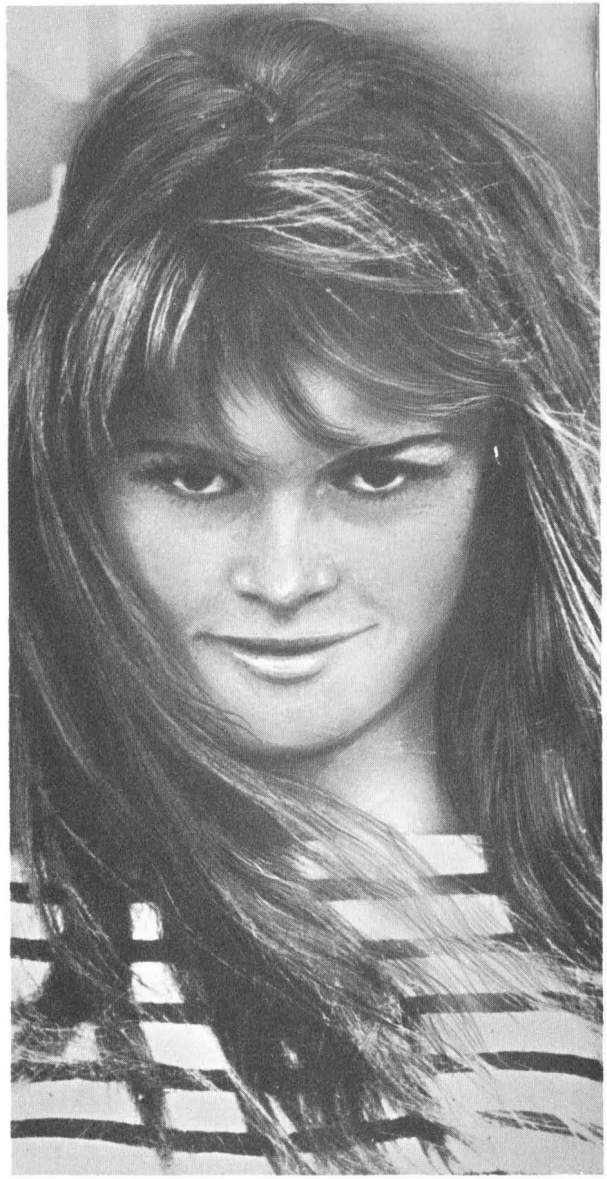
generously in her hit films, and nobody reproached her, whereas almost everyone is ready to regard BB as a very monument of immorality. Why does this character, fabricated by Marc Allegret and particularly by Vadim, arouse such animosity?

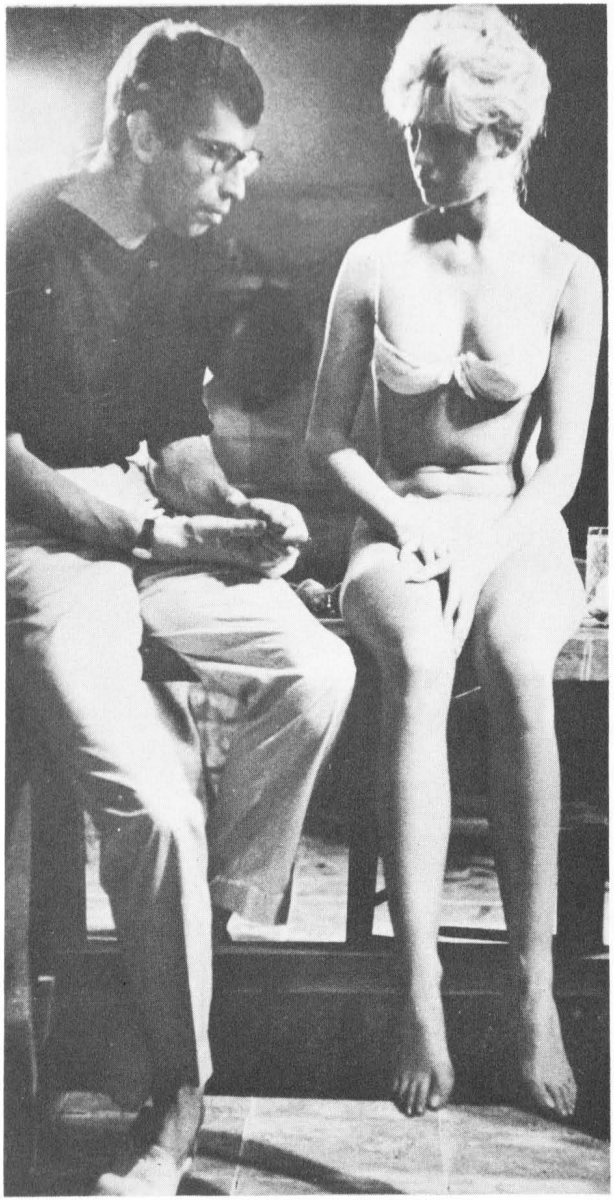
If we want to understand what BB represents, it is not important to know what the young woman named Brigitte Bardot is really like. Her admirers and detractors are concerned with the imaginary creature they see on the screen through a tremendous cloud of ballyhoo. In so far as she is exposed to the public gaze, her legend has been fed by her private life no less than by her film roles. This legend conforms to a very old myth that Vadim tried to rejuvenate. He invented a resolutely modern version of 'the eternal female' and thereby launched a new type of eroticism. It is this novelty that entices some people and shocks others.

Love can resist familiarity; eroticism cannot. Its role in the films dwindled considerably when social differences between the two sexes diminished. Between 1930 and 1940 it gave way to romanticism and sentimentality. The vamp was replaced by the girl friend, of whom Jean Arthur was the most perfect type. However, when in 1947 the cinema was threatened with a serious crisis, film-makers returned to eroti-



cism in an effort to win back the public's affection. In an age when woman drives a car and speculates on the stock exchange, an age in which she unceremoniously displays her nudity on public beaches, any attempt to revive the vamp and her mystery was out of the question. The films tried to appeal, in a cruder way, to the male's response to feminine curves. Stars were appreciated for the obviousness of their physical charms rather than for their passionate or languorous gaze. Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren and Lollobrigida are ample proof of the fact that the full-blown woman has not lost her power over men. However, the dream-merchants were also moving in other directions. With Audrey Hepburn, Françoise Arnoul, Marina Vlady, Leslie Caron and Brigitte Bardot they invented the erotic hoyden. For a part in his next film, *Dangerous Connections*, Vadim has engaged a fourteen-year-old girl. The child-woman is triumphing not only in the films. In *A View from the Bridge*, the Arthur Miller play which has been a hit in the United States and a bigger one in England and France, the heroine has just about reached the age of puberty. Nabokov's *Lolita*, which deals with the relations between a forty-year-old male and a 'nymphet' of twelve, was at the top of the best-seller list in England and America for





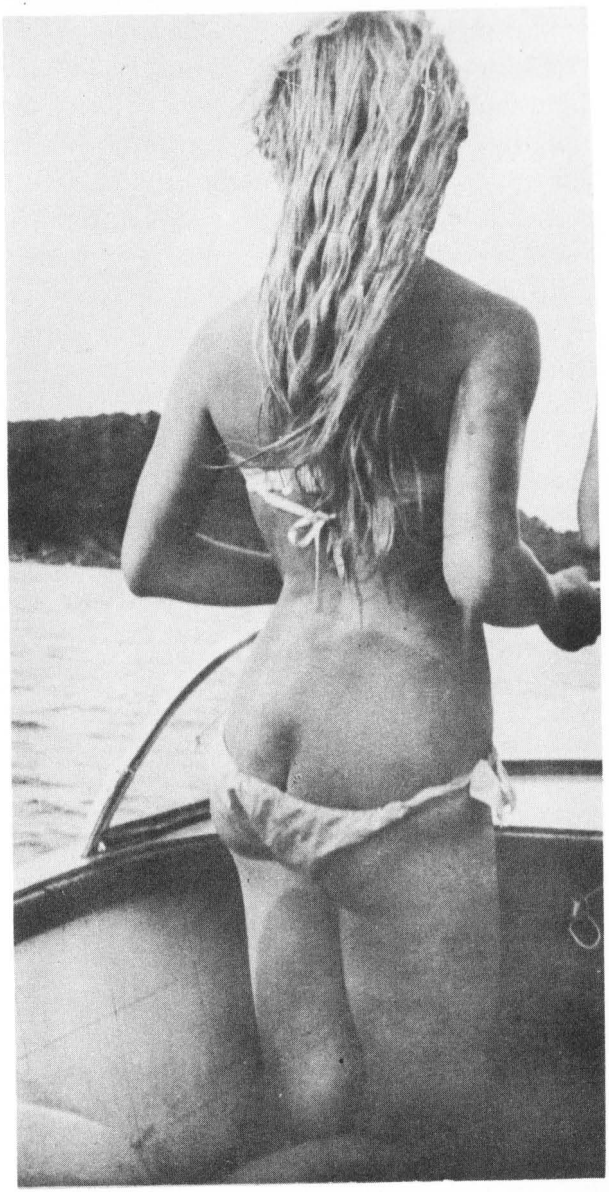
months. The adult woman now inhabits the same world as the man, but the child-woman moves in a universe which he cannot enter. The age difference re-establishes between them the distance that seems necessary to desire. At least that is what those who have created a new Eve by merging the 'green fruit' and '*femme fatale*' types have pinned their hopes on.

We shall see the reasons why they have not succeeded in France as well as in the United States.

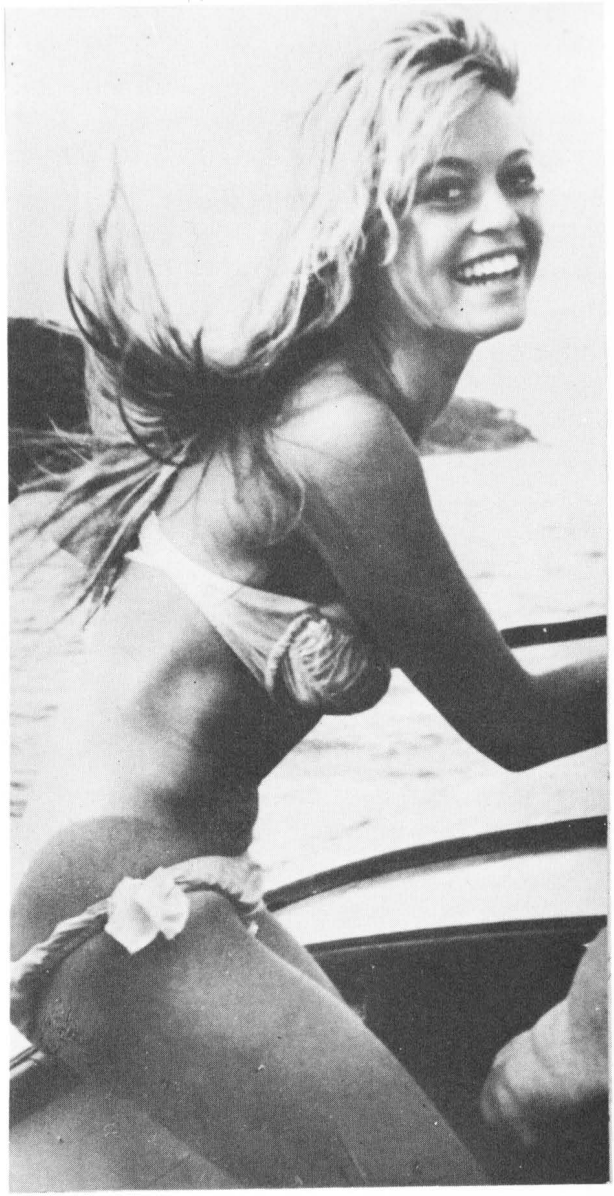
Brigitte Bardot is the most perfect specimen of these ambiguous nymphs. Seen from behind, her slender, muscular, dancer's body is almost androgynous. Femininity triumphs in her delightful bosom. The long voluptuous tresses of Mélisande flow down to her shoulders, but her hair-do is that of a negligent waif. The line of her lips forms a childish pout, and at the same time those lips are very kissable. She goes about barefooted, she turns up her nose at elegant clothes, jewels, girdles, perfumes, make-up, at all artifice. Yet her walk is lascivious and a saint would sell his soul to the devil merely to watch her dance. It has often been said that her face has only one expression. It is true that the outer world is hardly reflected in it at all and that it does not reveal great inner disturbance. But that air of indifference becomes her. BB has not

been marked by experience. Even if she has lived—as in *Love Is My Profession*—the lessons that life has given her are too confused for her to have learned anything from them. She is without memory, without a past, and, thanks to this ignorance, she retains the perfect innocence that is attributed to a mythical childhood.

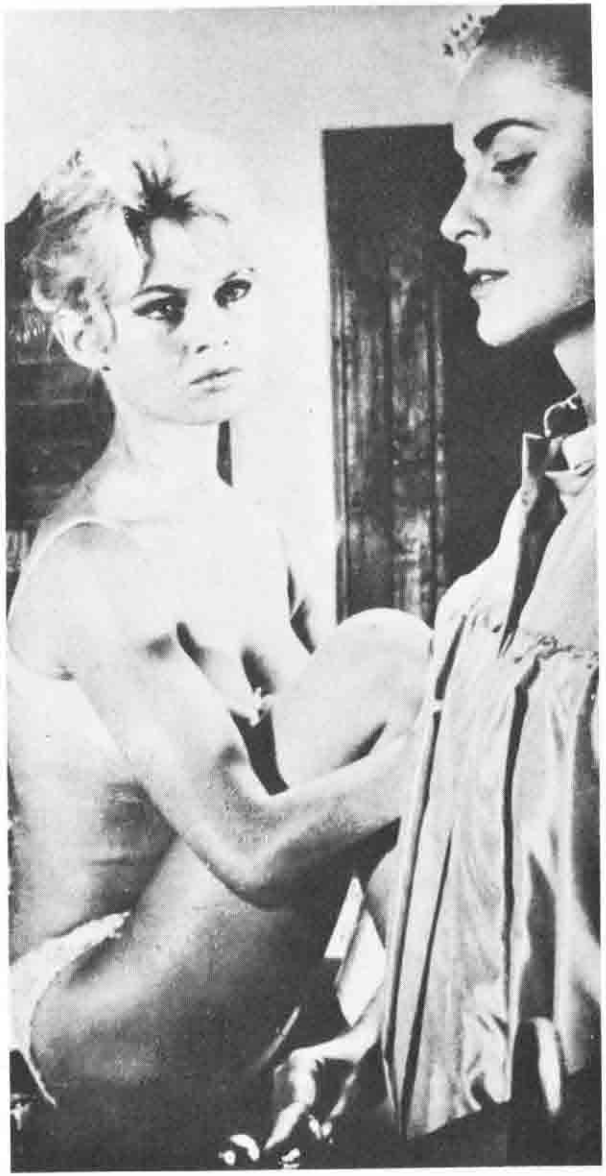
The legend that has been built up around Brigitte Bardot by publicity has for a long time identified her with this childlike and disturbing character. Vadim presented her as 'a phenomenon of nature'. 'She doesn't act,' he said. 'She exists.' 'That's right,' confirmed BB. 'The Juliette in *And God Created Woman* is exactly me. When I'm in front of the camera, I'm simply myself.' Brigitte was said not to bother to use a comb, but to do up her hair with her fingers. She was said to loathe all forms of worldliness. Her interviews presented her as being natural and unpretentious. Vadim went even further. He painted her as naïve to the point of absurdity. According to him, at the age of eighteen she thought that mice laid eggs. She was moody and capricious. At the gala performance of her film, *Please, Mr. Balzac*, the producer waited in vain for her to show up. At the last minute he informed the audience that she was not coming. She was described as a creature of instinct, as yielding blindly to



her impulses. She would suddenly take a dislike to the decoration of her room and then and there would pull down the hangings and start repainting the furniture. She is temperamental, changeable and unpredictable, and though she retains the limpidity of childhood, she has also preserved its mystery. A strange little creature, all in all; and this image does not depart from the traditional myth of femininity. The roles that her script-writers have offered her also have a conventional side. She appears as a force of nature, dangerous so long as she remains untamed, but it is up to the male to domesticate her. She is kind, she is good-hearted. In all her films she loves animals. If she ever makes anyone suffer, it is never deliberately. Her flightiness and slips of behaviour are excusable because she is so young and because of circumstances. Juliette had an unhappy childhood; Yvette, in *Love Is My Profession*, is a victim of society. If they go astray, it is because no one has ever shown them the right path, but a man, a real man, can lead them back to it. Juliette's young husband decides to act like a male, gives her a good sharp slap, and Juliette is all at once transformed into a happy, contrite and submissive wife. Yvette joyfully accepts her lover's demand that she be faithful and his imposing upon her a life of virtual



seclusion. With a bit of luck, this experienced, middle-aged man would have brought her redemption. BB is a lost, pathetic child who needs a guide and protector. This cliché has proved its worth. It flatters masculine vanity; it reassures mature and maturing women. One may regard it as obsolete; it cannot be accused of boldness. But the spectators do not believe in this victory of the man and of the social order so prudently suggested by the scenario—and that is precisely why Vadim's film and that of another French director, Autant-Lara, do not lapse into triviality. We may assume that the 'little rascal' will settle down, but Juliette will certainly never become a model wife and mother. Ignorance and inexperience can be remedied, but BB is not only unsophisticated but dangerously sincere. The perversity of a 'Baby Doll' can be handled by a psychiatrist; there are ways and means of calming the resentments of a rebellious girl and winning her over to virtue. In *The Barefoot Contessa*, Ava Gardner, despite her licentiousness, does not attack established values —she condemns her own instincts by admitting that she likes 'to walk in the mud'. BB is neither perverse nor rebellious nor immoral, and that is why morality does not have a chance with her. Good and evil are part of conventions to which she would not

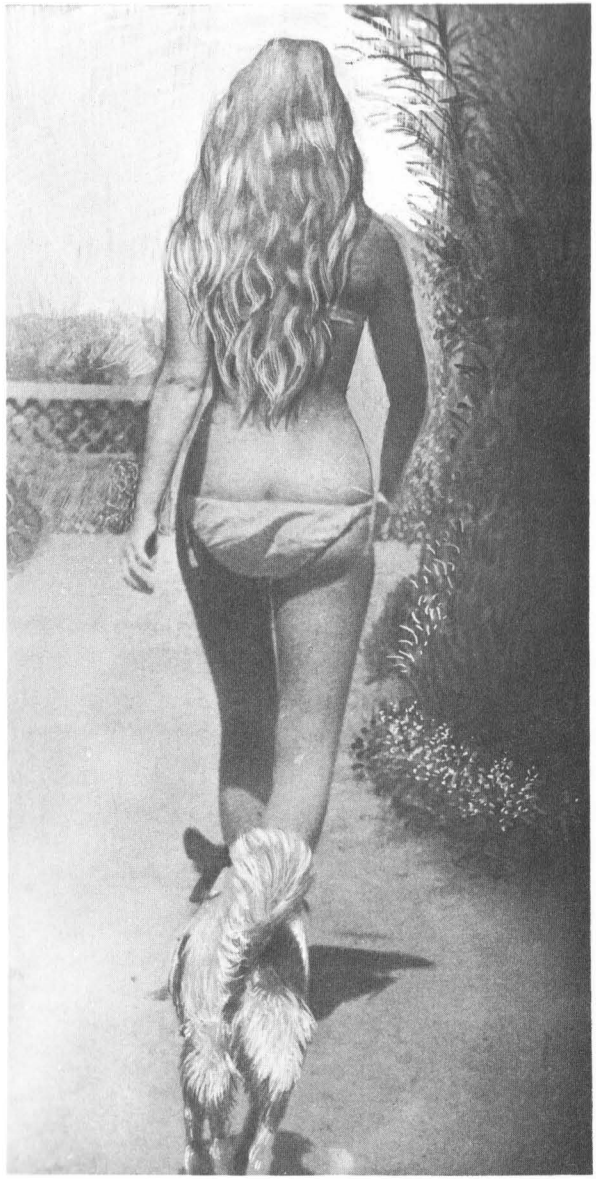


even think of bowing.

Nothing casts a sharper light on the character she plays than the wedding supper in *And God Created Woman.* Juliette immediately goes to bed with her young husband. In the middle of the banquet, she suddenly turns up in a bathrobe and, without bothering to smile or even look at the bewildered guests, she picks out from under their very noses a lobster, a chicken, fruit and bottles of wine. Disdainfully and tranquilly she goes off with the loaded tray. She cares not a rap for other people's opinion. BB does not try to scandalize. She has no demands to make; she is no more conscious of her rights than she is of her duties. She follows her inclinations. She eats when she is hungry and makes love with the same unceremonious simplicity. Desire and pleasure seem to her more convincing than precepts and conventions. She does not criticize others. She does as she pleases, and that is what is disturbing. She does not ask questions, but she brings answers whose frankness may be contagious. Moral lapses can be corrected, but how could BB be cured of that dazzling virtue —genuineness? It is her very substance. Neither blows nor fine arguments nor love can take it from her. She rejects not only hypocrisy and reprimands, but also prudence and calculation and premeditation of any

kind. For her, the future is still one of those adult inventions in which she has no confidence. 'I live as if I were going to die at any moment,' says Juliette. And Brigitte confides to us, 'Every time I'm in love, I think it's forever'. To dwell in eternity is another way of rejecting time. She professes great admiration for James Dean. We find in her, in a milder form, certain traits that attain, in his case, a tragic intensity—the fever of living, the passion for the absolute, the sense of the imminence of death. She, too, embodies—more modestly than he, but quite clearly—the credo that certain young people of our time are opposing to safe values, vain hopes and irksome constraint.

That is why a vast and traditional-minded rear guard declares that 'BB springs from and expresses the immorality of an age'. Decent or unwanted women could feel at ease when confronted with classical Circes who owed their power to dark secrets. These were coquettish and calculating creatures, depraved and reprobate, possessed of an evil force. From the height of their virtue, the fiancée, the wife, the great-hearted mistress and the despotic mother briskly damned these witches. But if Evil takes on the colours of innocence, they are in a fury. There is nothing of the 'bad woman' about BB. Frankness and kindness

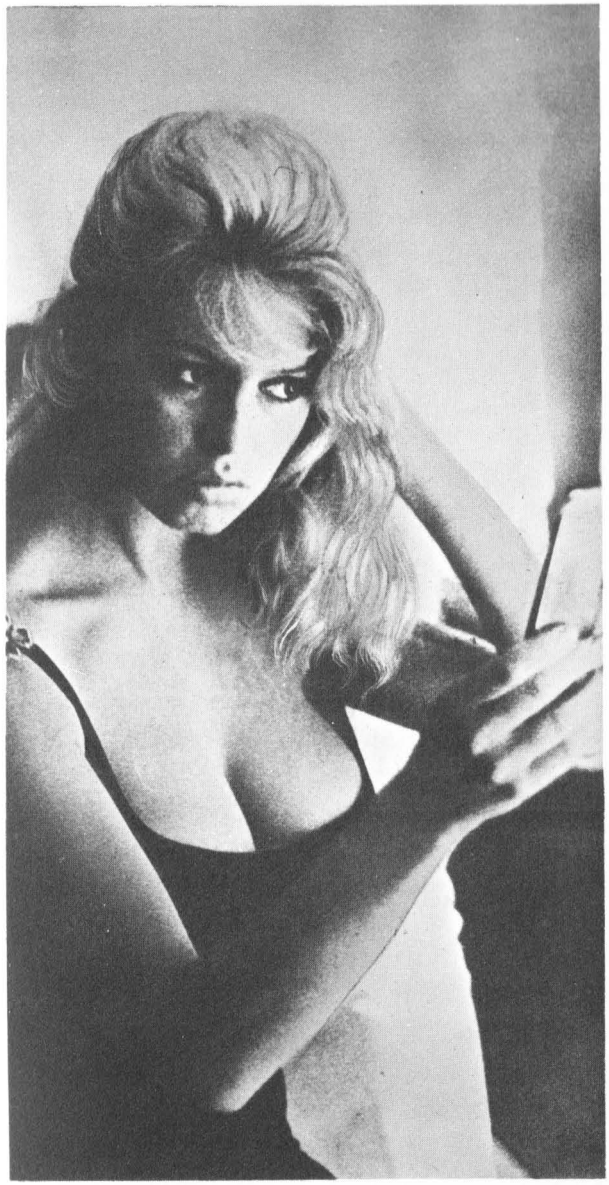


can be read on her face. She is more like a Pekingese than a cat. She is neither depraved nor venal. In *Love Is My Profession* she bunches up her skirt and crudely proposes a deal to Gabin. But there is a kind of disarming candour in her cynicism. She is blooming and healthy, quietly sensual. It is impossible to see in her the touch of Satan, and for that reason she seems all the more diabolical to women who feel humiliated and threatened by her beauty.

All men are drawn to BB's seductiveness, but that does not mean they are kindly disposed towards her. The majority of Frenchmen claim that woman loses her sex appeal if she gives up her artifices. According to them, a woman in trousers chills desire. Brigitte proves to them the contrary, and they are not at all grateful to her, because they are unwilling to give up their role of lord and master. The vamp was no challenge to them in this respect. The attraction she exercised was that of a passive thing. They rushed knowingly into the magic trap; they went to their doom the way one throws oneself overboard. Freedom and full consciousness remained their right and privilege. When Marlene displayed her silk-sheathed thighs as she sang with her hoarse voice and looked about her with sultry eyes, she was staging a ceremony, she was casting a spell. BB

does not cast spells; she is on the go. Her flesh does not have the abundance that, in others, symbolizes passivity. Her clothes are not fetishes and when she strips she is not unveiling a mystery. She is showing her body, neither more nor less, and that body rarely settles into a state of immobility. She walks, she dances, she moves about. Her eroticism is not magical, but aggressive. In the game of love, she is as much a hunter as she is a prey. The male is an object to her, just as she is to him. And that is precisely what wounds masculine pride. In the Latin countries, where men cling to the myth of 'the woman as object', BB's naturalness seems to them more perverse than any possible sophistication. To spurn jewels and cosmetics and high heels and girdles is to refuse to transform oneself into a remote idol. It is to assert that one is man's fellow and equal, to recognize that between the woman and him there is mutual desire and pleasure. Brigitte is thereby akin to the heroines of Françoise Sagan, although she says she feels no affinity for them—probably because they seem to her too thoughtful.

But the male feels uncomfortable if, instead of a doll of flesh and blood, he holds in his arms a conscious being who is sizing him up. A free woman is the very contrary of a light woman. In her role of confused



female, of homeless little slut, BB seems to be available to everyone. And yet, paradoxically, she is intimidating. She is not defended by rich apparel or social prestige, but there is something stubborn in her sulky face, in her sturdy body. 'You realize,' an average Frenchman once said to me, 'that when a man finds a woman attractive, he wants to be able to pinch her behind.' A ribald gesture reduces a woman to a thing that a man can do with as he pleases without worrying about what goes on in her mind and heart and body. But BB has nothing of the 'easygoing kid' about her, the quality that would allow a man to treat her with this kind of breeziness. There is nothing coarse about her. She has a kind of spontaneous dignity, something of the gravity of childhood. The difference between Brigitte's reception in the United States and in France is due partly to the fact that the American male does not have the Frenchman's taste for broad humour. He tends to display a certain respect for women. The sexual equality that BB's behaviour affirms wordlessly has been recognized in America for a long time. Nevertheless, for a number of reasons that have been frequently analysed in America, he feels a certain antipathy to the 'real woman'. He regards her as an antagonist, a praying mantis, a tyrant. He abandons

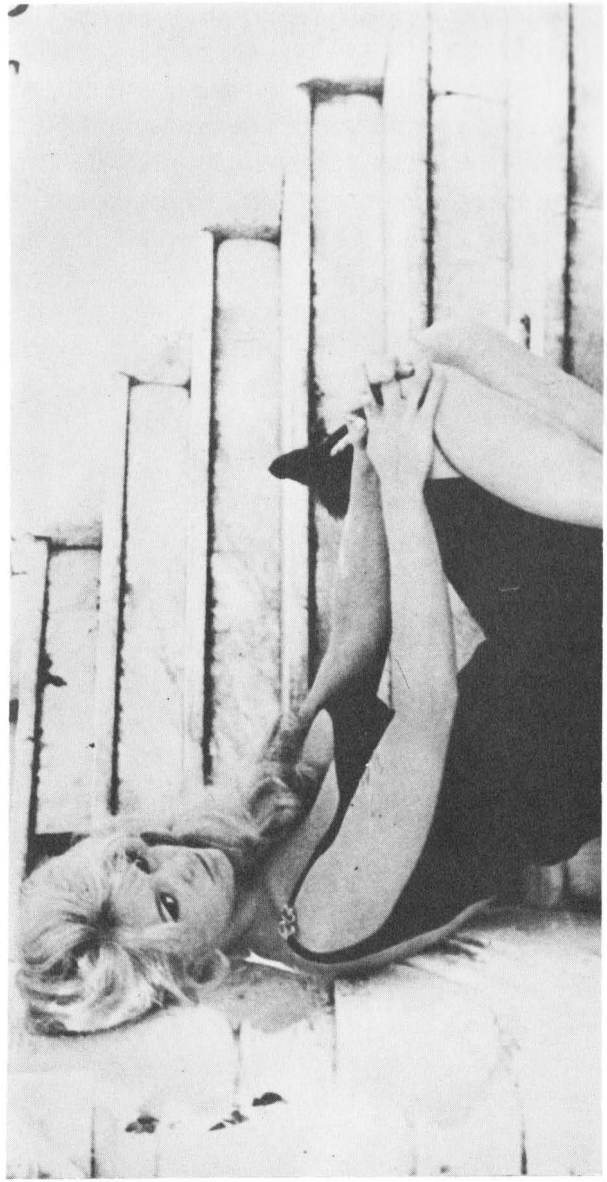
himself eagerly to the charms of the 'nymph' in whom the formidable figure of the wife and the 'Mom' is not yet apparent. In France, many women are accomplices of this feeling of superiority in which men persist. Their men prefer the servility of these adults to the haughty shamelessness of BB.

She disturbs them all the more in that, though discouraging their jollity, she nevertheless does not lend herself to idealistic sublimation. Garbo was called 'The Divine'; Bardot, on the other hand, is of the earth earthy. Garbo's visage had a kind of emptiness into which anything could be projected—nothing can be read into Bardot's face. It is what it is. It has the forthright presence of reality. It is a stumbling-block to lewd fantasies and ethereal dreams alike. Most Frenchmen like to indulge in mystic flights as a change from ribaldry, and vice-versa. With BB they get nowhere. She corners them and forces them to be honest with themselves. They are obliged to recognize the crudity of their desire, the object of which is very precise —that body, those thighs, that bottom, those breasts. Most people are not bold enough to limit sexuality to itself and to recognize its power. Anyone who challenges their hypocrisy is accused of being cynical.

In a society with spiritualistic pretensions, BB appears as something deplorably materialistic and prosaic. Love has been disguised in such falsely poetic trappings that this prose seems to me healthy and restful. I approve Vadim's trying to bring eroticism down to earth. Nevertheless, there is one thing for which I blame him, and that is for having gone so far as to de-humanize it. The 'human factor' has lost some of its importance in many spheres. Technical progress has relegated it to a subordinate and at times insignificant position. The implements that man uses—his dwelling, his clothes, etc—tend towards functional rationalization. He himself is regarded by politicians, brains-trusters, publicity agents, military men and even educators, by the entire 'organization world', as an object to be manipulated. In France, there is a literary school that reflects this tendency. The 'young novel'—as it calls itself—is bent on creating a universe as devoid as possible from human meanings, a universe reduced to shiftings of volumes and surfaces, of light and shade, to the play of space and time; the characters and their relationships are left in the background or even dropped entirely. This quest is of interest only to a small number of initiates. It has certainly not influenced Vadim, but he, too, reduces the world, things and bodies to

their immediate presence. In real life, and usually in good novels and films, individuals are not defined only by their sexuality. Each has a history, and his or her eroticism is involved in a certain situation. It may even be that the situation creates it. In *African Queen*, neither Humphrey Bogart nor Katharine Hepburn, who are presented as aged and worn, arouses desire beforehand. Yet when Bogart puts his hand on Katharine's shoulder for the first time, his gesture unleashes an intense erotic emotion. The spectators identify themselves with the man, or the woman, and the two characters are transfigured by the feeling that each inspires in the other. But when the hero and heroine are young and handsome, the more the audience is involved in their history, the more it feels their charm. It must therefore take an interest in it. For example, in Ingmar Bergman's *Sommarlek*, the idyll which is related is not set in the past arbitrarily. As a result of this device, we witness the revels of two particular adolescents. The young woman, who has moved us and aroused our interest, evokes her youthful happiness. She appears before us, at the age of sixteen, already weighed down with her entire future. The landscape about her is not a mere setting, but a medium of communication between her and us. We see it with her eyes. Through

the lapping of the waters and the clearness of the nocturnal sky, we merge with her. All her emotions become ours, and emotion sweeps away shame. The 'summer trifling' —caresses, embraces, words—that Bergman presents is far more 'amoral' than Juliette's adventures in *And God Created Woman*. The two lovers have barely emerged from childhood. The idea of marriage or of sin does not occur to them. They embrace with hesitant eagerness and unchaste naïveté. Their daring and jubilation triumphantly defy what is called virtue. The spectator does not dream of being shocked because he experiences with them their poignant happiness. When I saw *And God Created Woman*, people laughed during scenes. They laughed because Vadim does not appeal to our complicity. He 'de-situates' sexuality, and the spectators become voyeurs because they are unable to project themselves on the screen. This partially justifies their uneasiness. The ravishing young woman whom they surprise, at the beginning of the film, in the act of exposing her nakedness to the sun, is no one, an anonymous body. As the film goes on, she does not succeed in becoming someone. Nonchalantly combining convention and provocation, Vadim does not deign to lure the audience into the trap of a convincing story. The characters are treated



allusively; that of BB is loaded with too many intentions for anyone to believe in its reality. And the town of St-Tropez is merely a setting that has no intimate connection with the lives of the main characters. It has no effect on the spectator. In *Sommarlek*, the world exists; it reflects for the young lovers their confusion, their anxious desire, their joy. An innocent outing in a boat is as erotically meaningful as the passionate night preceding it and the one to follow. In Vadim's film, the world is absent. Against a background of fake colours he flashes a number of 'high spots' in which all the sensuality of the film is concentrated: a strip-tease, passionate love-making, a mambo sequence. This discontinuity heightens the aggressive character of BB's femininity. The audience is not carried away once and for all into an imaginary universe. It witnesses without much conviction, an adventure which does not excite it and which is broken up by 'numbers' in which everything is so contrived as to keep it on tenterhooks. It protects itself by snickering. A critic has written that BB's sexuality was too 'cerebral' to move a Latin audience. This amounts to making BB responsible for Vadim's style, an analytical and consequently abstract style that, as I have said, puts the spectator in the position of a voyeur. The

consenting voyeur who feeds on 'blue films' and 'peep shows', seeks gratifications other than the visual. The spectator who is a voyeur in spite of himself reacts with annoyance, for it is no fun to witness a hot performance cold-bloodedly. When BB dances her famous mambo, no one believes in Juliette. It is BB who is exhibiting herself. She is as alone on the screen as the strip-tease artist is alone on the stage. She offers herself directly to each spectator. But the offer is deceptive, for as the spectators watch her, they are fully aware that this beautiful young woman is famous, rich, adulated and completely inaccessible. It is not surprising that they take her for a slut and that they take revenge on her by running her down.

But reproaches of this kind cannot be levelled against *Love Is My Profession*, the film in which BB has displayed the most talent. Autant-Lara's direction, Pierre Bost's and Aurench's scenario and dialogue and Gabin's performance all combine to grip the spectator. In this context, BB gives her most convincing performance. But her moral reputation is none the better for it. The film has aroused furious protests; actually it attacks the social order much more bitingly than any of her early ones. The 'amoralism' of Yvette, the heroine, is radical. She prostitutes herself

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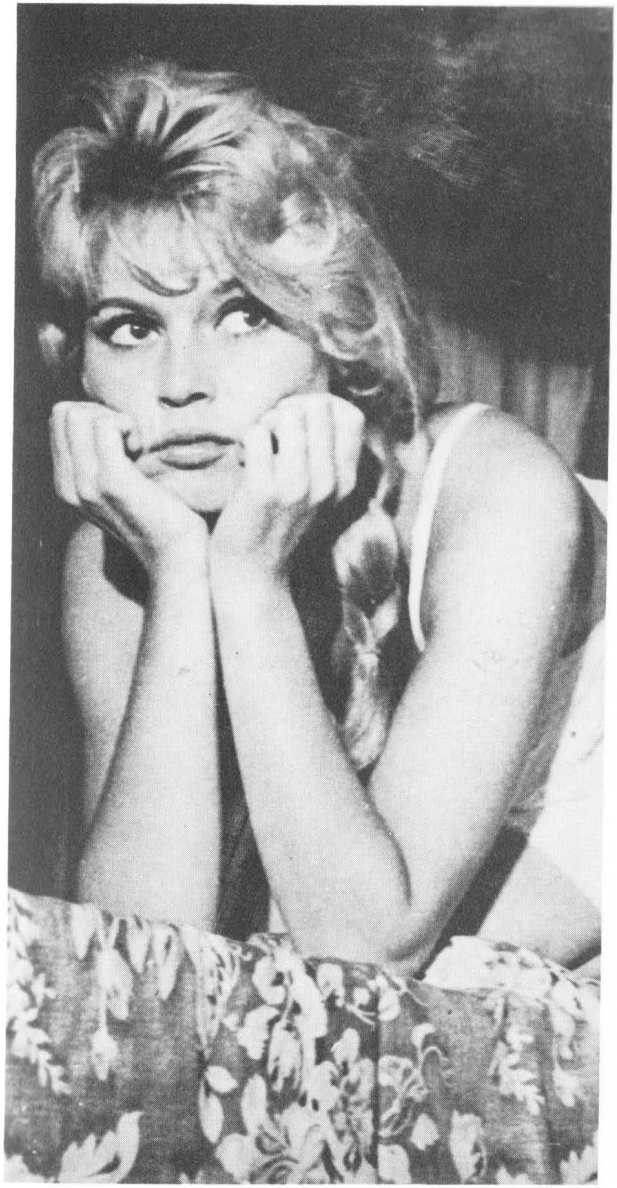
with indifference, organizes a hold-up and has no hesitation about striking an old man. She proposes to a great lawyer a deal that threatens to dishonour him. She gives herself to him without love. Then she falls in love with him, deceives him and artlessly keeps him informed of her infidelities. She confesses to him that she has had several abortions. However, although the scenario indicates for a moment the possibility of a conversion, she is not presented as being unconscious of the nature of her behaviour and capable of being won over to Good, as defined by respectable folk. Truth is on her side. Never does she fake her feelings. She never compromises with what seems to her to be obviously true. Her genuineness is so contagious that she wins over her lover, the old unethical lawyer. Yvette awakens whatever sincerity and dynamism still remain in him. The authors of this film took over the character created by Vadim, but they charged it with a much more subversive meaning: purity is not possible in our corrupt society except for those who have rejected it or who deliberately cut themselves off from it.

But this character is now in the process of evolving. BB has probably been convinced that in France nonconformity is on the way out. Vadim is accused of having distorted her image—which is certainly not untrue.



People who know BB speak of her amiable disposition, her kindness and her youthful freshness. She is neither silly nor scatter-brained, and her naturalness is not an act. It is nevertheless striking that recent articles which pretend to reveal the 'real BB', 'BB seen through the keyhole', 'the truth about BB', mention only her edifying traits of character. Brigitte, we are told again and again, is just a simple girl. She loves animals and adores her mother. She is devoted to her friends, she suffers from the hostility she arouses, she repents of her caprices, she means to mend her ways. There are excuses for her lapses: fame and fortune came too suddenly, they turned her head, but she is coming to her senses. In short, we are witnessing a veritable rehabilitation, which in recent weeks has gone very far. Definitive redemption, for a star, comes with marriage and motherhood.

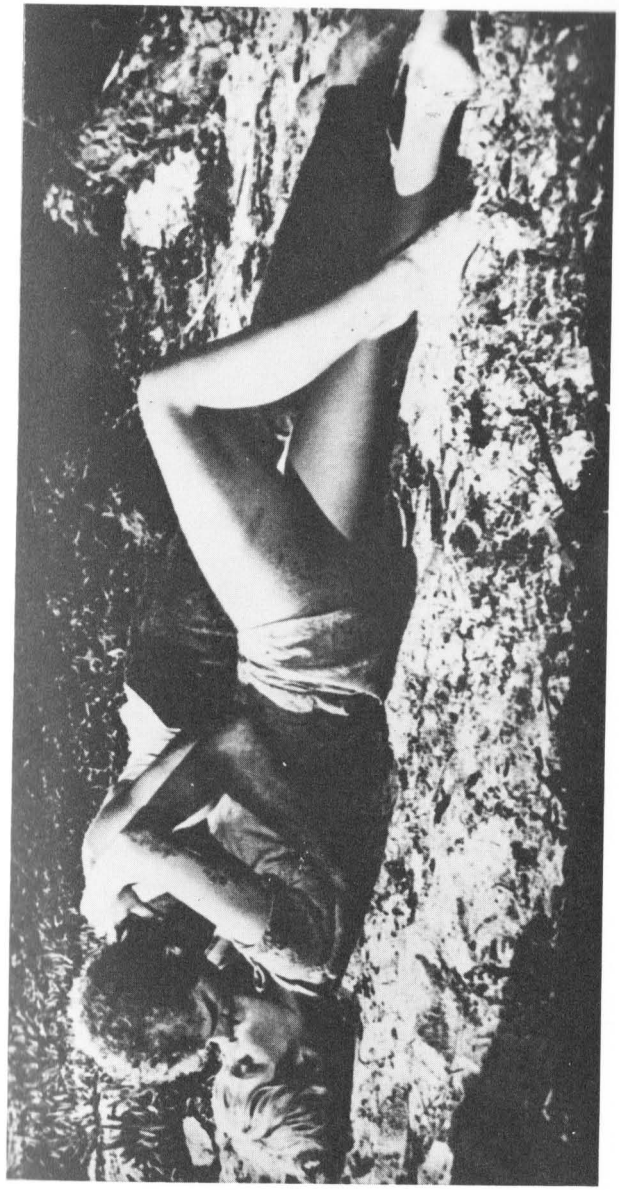
Brigitte speaks only faintly about getting married. On the other hand, she often declares enthusiastically that she adores the country and dreams of taking up farming.[1] In France, love of cows is regarded as a token of high morality. Gabin is sure of winning the public's sympathy when he declares that 'a cow is more substantial than glory'. Stars are photographed as much as possible in the act of feeding their

[1] Written before Mademoiselle Bardot became Madame Charrier.

chickens or digging in their gardens. This passion for the soil is appropriate to the reasonable bourgeoise that, as we are assured, Brigitte is bent on becoming. She has always known the price of things and has always gone over her cook's accounts. She follows the stock market closely and gives her broker well-informed instructions. During an official luncheon, she is said to have dazzled the director of the Bank of France with her knowledge. To know how to place one's money is a supreme virtue in the eyes of the French bourgeoisie. A particularly imaginative journalist has gone so far as to inform his readers that Brigitte has such a passion for the absolute that she may enter upon the paths of mysticism. Wife and mother, farmerette, businesswoman, Carmelite nun, BB has a choice of any of these exemplary futures. But one thing is certain: on the screen she is already beginning to convert. In her next film, *Babette Goes to War*,[1] she will play a heroine of the Resistance. Her charming body will be hidden from us by a uniform and sober attire. 'I want everyone under sixteen to be able to come and see me', she has been made to say. The film will end with a military parade in which Babette acclaims General de Gaulle.

Is the metamorphosis definitive? If so, there will still be a number of people who

[1] Written before this film was released.



will be sorry. Exactly who? A lot of young people belong to the old guard, and there are older ones who prefer truth to tradition. It would be simple-minded to think that there is a conflict of two generations regarding BB. The conflict that does exist is between those who want *mores* to be fixed once and for all and those who demand that they evolve. To say that 'BB embodies the immorality of an age' means that the character she has created challenges certain taboos accepted by the preceding age, particularly those which denied women sexual autonomy. In France, there is still a great deal of emphasis, officially, on women's dependence upon men. The Americans, who are actually far from having achieved sexual equality in all spheres, but who grant it theoretically, have seen nothing scandalous in the emancipation symbolized by BB. But it is, more than anything else, her frankness that disturbs most of the public and that delights the Americans. 'I want there to be no hypocrisy, no nonsense about love,' BB once said. The debunking of love and eroticism is an undertaking that has wider implications than one might think. As soon as a single myth is touched, all myths are in danger. A sincere gaze, however limited its range, is a fire that may spread and reduce to ashes all the shoddy disguises

that camouflage reality. Children are forever asking why, why not. They are told to be silent. Brigitte's eyes, her smile, her presence, impel one to ask oneself why, why not. Are they going to hush up the questions she raised without a word? Will she, too, agree to talk lying twaddle? Perhaps the hatred she has aroused will calm down, but she will no longer represent anything for anyone. I hope that she will not resign herself to insignificance in order to gain popularity. I hope she will mature, but not change.

1952 *Le Trou normand* (not yet shown in England) directed by Jean Bojer, with Bourvil, Nadine Basil, Jane Marken. (French production)

Manina, la fille sans voiles (English title, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter*) directed by W. Rozier, with Jean François Calvet.

Les dents longues (not yet shown in England) directed by Daniel Gélin with Daniel Gélin and D. Delorme. (French production)

1953 *Le portrait de son père* (not yet shown in England) directed by André Berthomieu, with Jean Richard, Michèle Philippe, Mona Goya, Duvalles. (French production)

Act of love (French title, *Un Acte d'Amour*) directed by Anatole Litvak, with Kirk Douglas and Dany Robin. (Franco-American production)

1954 *Tradita* (not yet shown in England) directed by Mario Bonnard, with Lucia Bose and Pierre Cressoy. (Italian production)

Si Versailles m'était conté (English title, *Versailles*) directed by Sacha Guitry, with Sacha Guitry and Claudette Colbert. (French production)

Le fils de Caroline Chérie (not yet shown in England) directed by Jean Devaivre, with Jean Claude Pascal. (French production)

1955 *Helen of Troy* (French title, *Hélène de Troie*) directed by Robert Wise, with Rossana Podesta and Jacques Sernas. (American production)

Futures vedettes (English title, *Sweet Sixteen*) directed by Marc Allegret, with Jean Marais. (Franco-Italian production)

Doctor at Sea (French title, *Rendezvous à Rio*) directed by Ralph Thomas, with Dirk Bogarde and James Robertson Justice.

Les grandes manoeuvres (English title, *Summer Manoeuvres*) directed by René Clair, with Michèle Morgan and Gérard Philipe. (Franco-Italian production)

La lumière d'en face (English title, *The Light Across the Street*) directed by Georges Lacombe, with Raymond Pellegrin. (French production)

Cette sacrée Gamine (English title, *Mam'zelle Pigalle*) directed by Michel Boisrond, with Jean Bretonnière. (French production)

1956 *Mio figlio Nerone* (English title, *Nero's Weekend*) directed by Steno, with Alberto Sordi, Gloria Swanson, Vittorio De Sica and Giorgia Moll. (Italian-French production)

En effeuillant la marguerite (English title, *Mam'zelle Striptease*) directed by Marc Allegret, with Daniel Gélin. (French production)

Et Dieu créa la femme (English title, *And God created woman*) directed by Roger Vadim, with Curt Jurgens. (French production)

La mariée est trop belle (English title, *The Bride is too Beautiful*) directed by Pierre Gaspard-Huit, with Louis Jourdan and Micheline Presle. (French production)

1957 *Une parisienne* (English title, *Parisienne*) directed by Michel Boisrond, with Charles Boyer, André Luguet and Henry Vidal. (Franco-Italian production)

1958 *En cas de malheur* (English title, *Love is my Profession*) directed by Claude Autant-Lara, with Jean Gabin, Edwige Feuillère and Franco Interlenghi. (Franco-Italian production)

Les bijoutiers du clair de lune (English title, *Heaven fell that night*) directed by Roger Vadim, with Alida Valli and Stephen Boyd. (Franco-Italian production)

La femme et le pantin (English title, *A Woman like Satan*) directed by Julien Duvivier, with Antonio Vilar, Michel Roux and Dario Moreno. (French-Italian production)

1959 *Babette s'en va-t-en guerre* (English title, *Babette goes to War*) directed by Christian-Jacque, with Jacques Charrier, Hannes Messemer and Yves Vincent. (French production)

Voulez vous danser avec moi? (English title, *Come dance with me*) directed by Michel Boisrond, with Henry Vidal, Dawn Addams. (French-Italian production)

La Verité (English title, *The Truth*) directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot, with Jean-Paul Belmondo. (Franco-American production)

1961 *La vie privée* (English title, *A Very Private Affair*, not yet shown in England) directed by Louis Malle with Marcello Mastroianni, produced by Christine Gouze-Renal. (Cipra-Progefi production)